

## Paterson man gets probation in scam

He issued bad checks to repay debt owed to Parsippany man, 79

BY PEGGY WRIGHT  
DAILY RECORD

A Paterson man was sentenced Monday to five years probation for issuing \$68,000 in bad checks to supposedly repay an elderly Parsippany man who had loaned him the money and treated him like a son for years.



William Caywood Jr., 38, was originally charged last year, along with an acquaintance, with extorting money from the now-79-year-old victim and threatening to have him roughed up by a mobster if

he refused.

The Morris County Prosecutor's Office opted not to pursue the extortion charges and Caywood in April pleaded guilty to issuing bad checks totaling \$68,000 between Jan. 15 and March 31, 2005, to the victim.

Assistant Prosecutor Brian DiGiacomo originally offered Caywood a plea bargain of three years in state prison, but the agreement was amended Monday to five years' probation and the 274 days that Caywood spent in the county jail before posting bail. DiGiacomo told Superior Court Judge Salem Vincent Ahto in Morristown that the

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victim was anxious to start getting his money back, which Caywood could not repay from behind bars.

Caywood and cohort Lucien Vanoverberghe, 26, of Paterson, were accused together of victimizing the Parsippany resident.

Vanoverberghe pleaded guilty in February to making terroristic threats to the man and was sentenced to 364 days in the county jail.

Defense lawyer Alexander Pagano told the judge his client never meant to harm or fool the victim and was sincere in wanting to pay him back. But working in the construction and contracting industry for some 18 years, Caywood frequently needed cash to start projects and couldn't

come up with funds to repay the victim, Pagano said.

The victim met Caywood nearly 15 years ago, treated him like a son and got involved in some business ventures with him, including construction, authorities said. Caywood in court promised a repayment plan of \$500 a month and told the judge: "I'm sorry for hurting (the victim). I have every intention of paying him every month."

The judge retorted: "In 2 1/2

years, you haven't paid a penny. You haven't paid a penny and there are plenty of ways to do it." Caywood replied that he was not allowed to have contact with the victim. "You take a senior citizen and his spouse and you victimize them," the judge said. "I don't think you'd pull that stunt with someone a lot younger."

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